

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim 7 has been amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2, and it is thus respectfully submitted that this §112 rejection is overcome.

Pending claims 1-5, 7, 9-11 and 15-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,058,060 (Wong). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. As to amended claim 1, Wong nowhere discloses a method that includes providing a negative voltage and a control negative voltage to a decoder. Instead, the portion of Wong cited by the Office Action merely teaches that a wordline decoder 120 applies a negative voltage to an unselected wordline. Nowhere however does this or any other portion of Wong teach providing that negative voltage and a control negative voltage to the decoder. For at least this reason, claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom are patentable.

Amended claim 10 is patentable over Wong as nowhere does Wong teach a decoder that includes a transistor to receive a negative control voltage and a negative voltage and to pass the negative voltage to a deselected address line. In this regard, nowhere does Wong describe in any detail the structure of its decoder 120. Instead Wong merely teaches that a driver provides a voltage to the wordline. Wong, col. 9, lns. 31-44. Accordingly, claim 10 and the claims depending therefrom are patentable over Wong.

Claim 17 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 20. Claim 20 was not rejected under any ground in the Office Action, and it appears that claim 20 includes allowable subject matter. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that for at least this reason, amended claim 17 and the claims depending therefrom are patentable.

Claims 22-24 and 28-29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Wong. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. As to amended claim 22, nowhere does Wong teach or suggest that a decoder to supply a negative voltage to a deselected wordline includes a first transistor to pass the negative voltage and a second transistor to pass a program voltage if the deselected wordline becomes a selected wordline. For at least this reason, claims 22-24 and 28-29 are patentable over Wong. While dependent claim 30 was not rejected, it also was not indicated as being allowable. For at least the same reason as for claim 22, claim 30 is also patentable.


New dependent claims 31-33 are patentable at least for the same reasons as the independent claims from which they depend.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that at least certain claims include allowable subject matter. However, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are patentable in light of the above amendments and remarks.

In view of these remarks, the application is now in condition for allowance and the Examiner's prompt action in accordance therewith is respectfully requested. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 20-1504.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 30, 2005



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